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TITLE: SEX, DRUGS, ROCKS and HIV (A Peer Education Model for incarcerated Substance Abusers)

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ISSUE: It is well documented that a great portion of the substance abusers, who are at risk for HIV infection remain hidden due to the mindset and behaviors use. A great portion of this hard-to-reach population may be found in local correctional facilities at any given time. The difficulties in reaching high risk substance abusers, especially in the "drugging environment" includes 1) lack of trust for those outside of their peer group. 2) There is usually only time for very brief contact by street outreach workers. Thus, Education and Prevention providers are challenged to develop strategic and effective means of reaching this population.

SETTING: Peer-facilitated HIV/AIDS and SUBSTANCE-ABUSE workshops within the Broward County Jail cells or unit (within detainees' actual living quarters)

PROJECT: To address this issue, a collaboration intervention project for incarcerated substance abusers was developed. The agencies taking part in this effort are Broward House, Inc, the Broward County Health Department and Broward Sheriff's Office. Broward House (lead agency): 1) Recruited, trained and secured BSO clearance for *uniquely qualified* peer educators. 2) Developed program curriculum a series of (4) two-hour sessions to deliver education and prevention skills to incarcerated substance users in the areas of HIV/AIDS and SUBSTANCE ABUSE. 3) Coordinate periodic meetings between collaborative partners to evaluate progress of the program.

RESULTS: From June 1998 through March 1999, the S, D, R&H Program has served approximately 500 Broward County detainees, the majority being African American males between the ages of 25-39. About 20% of those served have been minority women age 25-39. The program has exceeded all of its initial goals and objectives during the year of its existence.

LESSONS LEARNED:

- 1) There is therapeutic transactional value in the curriculum being conducted by uniquely qualified peer educators (PWA's who are recovering substance abusers) who use their experiences as a means to reach their audience. PWA's are a valuable resource to education and prevention services providers.
- 2) That collaborative partnership between education and prevention service providers can be very effective.

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